



## UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

---

Commissioner for Patents  
United States Patent and Trademark Office  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450  
[www.uspto.gov](http://www.uspto.gov)

In re Patent No. 6976044  
Issue Date: December 13, 2005  
Application No. 09944559  
Filed: August 31, 2001  
Attorney Docket No. 3927P016

:  
:DECISION GRANTING PETITION  
:UNDER 37 CFR 1.378(c)

This is a decision on the electronic petition, filed December 23, 2009, under 37 CFR 1.378(c) to accept the unintentionally delayed payment of the 3.5 year maintenance fee for the above-identified patent.

The petition is **GRANTED**.

The maintenance fee is accepted, and the above-identified patent reinstated as of December 23, 2009. This decision also constitutes notice that the fee has been accepted. An electronic copy of the petition and this decision has been created as an entry in the Image File Wrapper. Nevertheless, petitioner should print and retain an independent copy.

Telephone inquiries related to this electronic decision should be directed to the Electronic Business Center at 1-866-217-9197.